

# Week 2

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THE GOSPEL IS NOT A PRIVATE PARTY

## Introductory Talking Points

- Bro. Steve will be preaching his second sermon on Sharing Jesus this morning.
- We will continue our Life Group focus on Build Relationships/Share Jesus.
- Al Mohler, our guest preacher this Wednesday for Awesome August, will be preaching on Evangelism.
- In place of the evening worship services tonight and next Sunday evening (August 12 & 19), we will be going out as a Life Group and as a church to Share Jesus (passing out gift bags, looking for opportunities to share the gospel) in the neighborhoods around Bellevue.
- On Sunday afternoon, August 26, we will have Bellevue Loves Memphis and will seek to Share Jesus with those we are serving.
- Share Jesus is one fourth of the BBC Vision Frame! In other words, we as a church have embraced the mandate and privilege of sharing the gospel to compose one fourth of our focus, our energy, and our heart.

We are continuing our focus on our Share Jesus measure. *(If you have the Vision Statement of Bellevue in your classroom, walk over and point these out).*

- I am prepared to share the gospel.
- I am proactively developing relationships with lost people.
- I am engaged in local witnessing opportunities.
- I am taking the gospel to the nations.

## The Gospel Is Not a Private Party

Notes

*“Finally, they said to each other, ‘This is not right. This is a day of good news, and we aren’t sharing it with anyone! If we wait until morning, some calamity will certainly fall upon us. Come on, let’s go back and tell the people at the palace’”*  
(2 Kings 7:9 NLT).

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When was the last time you attempted something and you weren’t sure how it was going to end up? I’m not talking about you trying to fry an egg instead of scrambling it. I’m talking about really getting out on a limb. It could be something we might call “really spiritual” such as witnessing to someone or teaching a Bible class. It might be getting “out of the boat and getting out on the water with Jesus” and having a needed conversation with a family member.

For me, it was \_\_\_\_\_. Is there someone else willing to share the last time you got out on a limb with God?

I want to begin by sharing a true story with you from Mark Batterson’s book, *All In*. It’s about three paragraphs. However, I don’t believe you’ll get bored —probably blown away, but not bored.

A century ago, a band of brave souls became known as one-way missionaries. They purchased single tickets to the mission field without the return half. **And instead of suitcases, they packed their few earthly belongings into coffins.** As they sailed out of port, they waved good-bye to everyone they loved, everything they knew. They knew they’d never return home.

A.W. Milne was one of those missionaries. He set sail for the New Hebrides in the South Pacific, knowing full well that the headhunters who lived there had martyred every missionary before him. Milne did not fear for his life, because he had already died to himself. His coffin was packed.

For thirty-five years, he lived among that tribe and loved them. When he died, tribe members buried him in the middle of their village and inscribed this epitaph on his tombstone: **When he came there was no light. When he left there was no darkness.**

Batterson then makes this challenge: (*You might have a discussion time on any or all of these questions.*)

- When did we start believing that God wants to send us to safe places to do easy things?
- That faithfulness is holding the fort?
- That playing it safe is safe?
- That there is any greater privilege than sacrifice? That radical is anything but normal?
- Jesus didn't die to keep us safe. He died to make us dangerous.
- Faithfulness is not holding the fort. It's storming the gates of hell.
- The will of God is not an insurance plan. It's a daring plan.
- The complete surrender of your life to the cause of Christ isn't radical. It's normal.
- It's time to quit living as if the purpose of life is to arrive safely at death. It's time to go all in and all out for the All in All. Pack your coffin!<sup>1</sup>

Wow! That is a level commitment that is admirable and scriptural—however, it's one that most of us don't possess. But, you can take a step towards that type of commitment by responding in obedience to our lesson today. Turn in your Bible to 2 Kings 6. We are going to see from our text that *The Gospel is Not a Private Party*.

In 2 Kings 6 and 7 we see the story of men, outcasts from society, who came to realize that selfishness is a horrible sin.

The event we are studying takes place around 830 B.C. Let me give a little historical context. The nation of Israel is in a dark and downward slide. The nation had been strong under King David and Solomon. However, under Solomon's son, Rehoboam, the nation split. In 922 B.C., the ten northern tribes, now known as Israel, revolted against the rule of Rehoboam and began to follow Jeroboam. They ended up with

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<sup>1</sup> Batterson, Mark. *All In: You Are One Decision Away From a Totally Different Life* (Kindle Locations 50-52). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

Samaria as their capital. The two southern tribes, Judah and Benjamin, became known as Judah.

It was at this time that the nation of Israel was attacked by Ben-hadad, King of Aram. The Arameans laid siege to the capital city of the northern kingdom, Samaria. Let's read about what happened.

*Now is came about after this, that Ben-hadad king of Aram gathered all his army and went up and besieged Samaria. There was a great famine in Samaria; and behold, they besieged it, until a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and a fourth of a kab of dove's dung for five shekels of silver (2 Kings 6:24-25).*

### THE DESPERATE SITUATION THE PEOPLE FACED

The siege was so devastating that at its worst, the people were eating some of their most valuable possessions, their horses and mules. Not only were they eating them, they were eating parts you'd never think about eating! This is how bad the situation was. According to 1 Kings 10:29, a live horse during Solomon's reign was sold for 150 shekels. Now under siege, there is such a food shortage that a donkey's head costs 80 shekels!

If it wasn't bad enough that people were having donkey head soup, for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, the condition was so wretched that the fourth part of a kab (about half a liter) of dove's dung cost five shekels of silver. That's a lot of money considering that Jeremiah bought an entire field for 17 shekels. You will be enlightened to know that one commentary gave three suggestions about the nutritional possibilities of dove's dung. He said that dove's dung:

- was perhaps a type of food that we are not familiar with
- was a substitute for salt, or
- (and I think this is the correct answer) that the people had gotten so desperate they ate what they could find.

If eating dove's dung (bird poop) wasn't bad enough, it gets worse! Cannibalism was also being practiced.

I'm not staying here too long because it's so unimaginable, but

it's in the text, so we'll look at it.

Notes

*As the king of Israel was passing by on the wall a woman cried out to him, saying, "Help, my lord, O king!" He said, "If the LORD does not help you, from where shall I help you? From the threshing floor, or from the wine press?" And the king said to her, "What is the matter with you?" And she answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow. So we boiled my son and ate him;' and I said to her on the next day, 'Give your son, that we may eat him'; but she has hidden her son.' When the king heard the words of the woman, he tore his clothes—now he was passing by on the wall—and the people looked, and behold, he had sackcloth beneath on his body.*

(2 Kings 6:26-30).

This is a hopeless situation. Yet what these people were going through physically, people all around us are going through spiritually and emotionally every day. People are "without God and without hope in this world."

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Let's pause a minute here. I read recently that a federal agency, the CDC (Centers for Disease Control) stated that suicide is now the 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in the United States. How does it feel to be without God and without hope?

What does that feel like? Some of us spent a long time there; we can still remember.

What does that lost-ness look and feel like?

In chapter 6, we saw they **Faced a Desperate Situation.**

But in chapter 7, we see they **Found an Awesome Answer.**

Let's begin at verse 3:

*Now there were four leprous men at the entrance of the gate; and they said to one another, "Why do we sit here until we die?"*

*"If we say, 'We will enter the city,' then the famine is in the city and we will die there; and if we sit here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us go over to the camp of the Arameans. If they spare us, we will live; and if they kill us, we will but die."*

*They arose at twilight to go to the camp of the Arameans; when they came to the outskirts of the camp of the Arameans, behold, there was no one there.*

*For the Lord had caused the army of the Arameans to*

*hear a sound of chariots and a sound of horses, even the sound of a great army, so that they said to one another, "Behold, the king of Israel has hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us."*

*Therefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents and their horses and their donkeys, even the camp just as it was, and fled for their life.*

*When these lepers came to the outskirts of the camp, they entered one tent and ate and drank, and carried from there silver and gold and clothes, and went and hid them; and they returned and entered another tent and carried from there also, and went and hid them.*

*Then they said to one another, "We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news, but we are keeping silent; if we wait until morning light, punishment will overtake us. Now therefore come, let us go and tell the king's household." (2 Kings 7:3-9).*

I love verse 9 in the New Living Translation, "*Finally, they said to each other, 'This is not right. This is a day of good news, and we aren't sharing it with anyone! If we wait until morning, some calamity will certainly fall upon us. Come on, let's go back and tell the people at the palace'*" (NLT).

The lepers said, "*This is a day of good news and we aren't sharing it with anyone!*" They realized they couldn't just have a private party. How could they have a feast when others were starving?

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Let's stop and make the application here. How would you describe the impact of the gospel upon your life? How did your heart and your life change because you received Jesus as the Lord and Savior of your life? Be as specific as you can.

We've already seen that we have the good news, the gospel! We have the best news anyone can ever share, the best news anyone can ever hear!

- God loves us!
- Christ died for us. He died in our place, suffering what we deserved!

- When we repent, believe, and receive we are born again! Our names are written in the Lamb's book of life and we become a new creation in Christ!

Yet, way too many Christians aren't following the example of the lepers, they are not sharing the good news with people! They are acting like the gospel is a private party. Consider these statistics:

- 61% of Christians haven't shared their faith in the last 6 months.
- 79% of Christians haven't invited someone to church in the last year.
- 98% of Christians do not witness to nonbelievers weekly.
- 95% of Christians have never led another person to God. (From indigitous.org)

These lepers knew that they needed to share! They felt like they had a moral obligation to share their good news!

Also, they knew that if they waited until morning something bad would happen—a calamity would fall upon them. This is an easy application to make. God holds us accountable. How much we are blessed here on this earth depends on how we obey. Obedience brings blessing. Look at what God told the people through Moses:

*Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the LORD your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.*

*All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the LORD your God:*

*Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country.*

*Blessed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground and the offspring of your beasts, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock. (Deuteronomy 28:1-4).*

Obedience does not earn God's blessing, but it is the path to God's blessing.

And, there is a reward in Heaven for soul winners. Paul mentions this crown in his letter to the Thessalonians,

*“For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming?”* (1 Thessalonians 2:19).

### Application

Remember, the first measure we are looking at is “I am prepared to **share** the gospel.” It’s not enough to **know** it; we need to know it well enough to **share** it.

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Are there some things that you need to know by heart, some things that you have memorized? Sure, what are some of them?

- Your wife’s birthday (perhaps without telling the year)
- The names of your grandchildren
- Your social security number
- Your address

Why do you need to know those things by heart, why do you have them memorized, why do you need to have them memorized?

A simple gospel presentation is something we need to have down by memory. Let me share it with you. Follow along on your **Share Jesus Outline**. (*\*In the Resource Section you will find some simple illustrations to use with this Share Jesus outline.*)

We are going to practice this 3-4 minute outline today. But our goal is to have it memorized.

Now, I’d like for you to pair up and go over this Share Jesus Outline with one another. While you can always read things to people, sharing from your heart is an even more effective way to communicate the value of what you are saying. Like I said earlier, if someone asks you, “When is your wife’s birthday?” and you have to look at a piece of paper in your wallet or your contact app on your phone, you have a problem.

We are talking about 8 verses, at least three of them that you already know (John 3:16, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, and Romans 10:13). You have one passage that is probably

somewhat unfamiliar to you, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4. While I hope you'll eventually memorize the verses that go with "repent, believe, and receive," saying the words and a brief explanation gives you a clear presentation of the gospel.

*(Class members practice Share Jesus Outline.)*

See that wasn't bad was it? It's not like packing your belongings in a coffin and heading to the other side of the world. I'm not going to ask you to do that. But I do want to talk to you about coming to church this afternoon at 5:00 p.m., pairing up with other believers, and going out and to make Share Jesus visits.

We already have people who have agreed to be team leaders. If you are a Share Jesus leader, please hold up your hand. We just need team members. You won't have to say anything unless you want to. Here is how this works:

- We will meet in the Fellowship Hall. If you have a Bellevue Loves Memphis shirt, or a shirt that connects you with Bellevue, it would be a great thing to wear. If you don't have a Bellevue shirt, you can get one in the Bookstore for \$5.00. When you come in, there will be a diagram on the screen telling where our various Life Group Age Division (*tell the class what that is if they don't know*) will be gathered. I'll be there; our leaders will be there. We will pair up. Groups no larger than 3 are the best size—if 8 people show up at a door, it could be unnerving for someone. However, if your children are going with you, any size family is a win!
- Bro. Steve will share a few words, we will have a word of prayer, and then the team leader will pick up a sack with 8-14 Share Jesus bags. Each bag has a Jesus DVD (you can watch it in 24 languages) that has been seen by 3 billion people, a bag of Orville Redenbacher popcorn, a gospel tract, and some information about Bellevue.
- The sack has a map with a street within 3 miles of Bellevue. When we get to our destination, we will go door to door.
  - We will tell them we have a gift from Bellevue Baptist Church.
  - We'll ask them if they have ever been to Bellevue, and if they haven't, we will invite them.

- If there is an opening, we will also seek to share the gospel with them. But we won't be pushy. We won't force the conversation. However, we know two things:
  - We know that if they don't know Jesus, they are a heartbeat, a fatal car accident away from an eternity in Hell.
  - We know that the Spirit of God is working in people's lives and today may be the appointed day for someone's salvation (2 Corinthians 6:2).

## Conclusion

As we wrap things up, I'm not asking you to pack your belongings in a coffin and head overseas, never to return.

- However, I am going to urge you with all that I have in me to **die to yourself** and live to God.
- I'm asking you to join me, the leaders in this class, and a host of people from Bellevue as we go out and Build Relationships/Share Jesus with a lost world. You may not feel like you can share the gospel yet, but you can share a smile, invite someone to church, and perhaps have a word of prayer with them on the front porch.
- Maybe you don't feel like you're able to share the gospel outline by memory yet, but you can still share the love of Jesus and a smile.
- Perhaps you know you can and do need to share the gospel. You've heard it a thousand times. You know the verses. You say, "Repent, believe, and receive" when you talk in your sleep. You can do it. You just need to take a step of faith, knowing that you have someone with you who will step in if questions come up that you don't know how to answer.
- The gospel is not a private party. It is meant to be shared.

## FOR NEXT WEEK

*As you conclude—Encourage the class to continue to internalize the Share Jesus Gospel Outline. Remind them they will be asked to share it with one another again in class next week. (Look*

*under Resources for illustrations that can be used along with the gospel outline.)*

*In the Resources for this week you will find a “How to Share Your Testimony” explanation. Please plan on sharing your testimony utilizing this outline next week, or ask someone in your class to share their testimony.*

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Notes

## Resources

Notes

### QUOTES

The world has more winnable people than ever before...but it is possible to come out of a ripe field empty-handed. ~Donald McGavran

The evangelistic harvest is always urgent. The destiny of men and of nations is always being decided. Every generation is strategic. We are not responsible for the past generation, and we cannot bear the full responsibility for the next one; but we do have our generation. God will hold us responsible as to how well we fulfill our responsibilities to this age and take advantage of our opportunities. ~Billy Graham

The way from God to a human heart is through a human heart. ~Samuel Gordon

I believe that entertainment and amusements are the work of the enemy to keep dying men from knowing they're dying; and to keep enemies of God from remembering that they're enemies. ~A. W. Tozer

If you alter or obscure the biblical portrait of God in order to attract converts, you don't get converts to God, you get converts to an illusion. This is not evangelism, but deception. ~ John Piper

### WITNESSING ILLUSTRATIONS FOR SHARE JESUS OUTLINE

Jesus used illustrations.

- *"You are the salt of the earth, the light of the world."*
- *"The foolish man built his house on the sand; the wise man built his house on the rock—and the storms came."*
- *"It is not the healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick."*
- *"Unless you are born again, you cannot see the kingdom of God."*

He used illustrations to make **seemingly complex or obscure spiritual truths simple and easy to grasp.**

The following are illustrations you **can** use. They are **not required**, but are given simply as a tool. Don't worry about memorizing them, just know and use them as needed. If one "sticks," know that it will be easy to utilize when you need it.

### **God loves you.**

*"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16)*

- I have the best news you will hear today! I want to share with you some of the most familiar words in the English language—John 3:16.

### **We have all sinned.**

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).*

- If everyone in Memphis stood on the edge of the Grand Canyon and tried to jump across, some would get further than others. However, no one would make it to the other side.  
(Application: Some people live a better life than others, but no one lives the life they need to reach God's goal of perfection.)

### **God is holy and must punish sin.**

*"For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23)*

- If you've ever had a job, you've earned wages. Every week, every two weeks, you get paid for what you've done. For what you've done, in God's eyes, your sin has earned death.
- **This is an expanded illustration of sin and death. It deals with God's holiness requiring Him to punish sin**—Let's say someone broke into the home of your mother, or grandmother, severely beat her, robbed her of family heirlooms,

and then sold them. When that person is caught, if the judge felt sorry for the thief and let them off without some form of judgment, would he or she be a good, a just judge? No. In the same way, God must punish sin.

### **God sent His Son, Jesus, to save you.**

*“Christ died for our sins . . . He was buried . . . He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures”*  
(1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

- Jesus was either a liar, a lunatic, or Lord.

### **What must you do to be saved?**

*“Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish”*  
(Luke 13:13).

- Repentance is making a U-turn. It is a change of mind that leads to a change in direction. You are going down the street and realize that you left the stove on. Feeling bad won't turn the stove off. You have to **turn around**. You have to do a 180 degree turn.

*“Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, you and your household”* (Acts 16:31).

- When I came in this house, I sat in this chair, believing it will hold me up. Or—
- When I got up this morning, I took a drink of water out of the faucet, believing it was pure, clean water. (Application: What I believe, I commit myself to.)

*“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become the children of God, even to those who believe in His name”* (John 1:12).

- Someone could give you an awesome gift, a week in Hawaii for example, but in order for that gift to be yours—you have to receive it. If you turn it

down, if you don't receive it, the gift goes to waste. So it is with eternal life.

### **Call for a decision.**

- I can lead you in a prayer much as a pastor leads a man or a women in their marriage vows.

## **SHARING YOUR TESTIMONY**

*(Copies Of This Outline Will Be Provided Next Week)*

In *Share Jesus Like It Matters*, Bro. Steve writes, "If sharing one's testimony was powerful enough and wise enough for the theologian Paul, it is necessary and appropriate for any believer today" (page 71). People may disagree with your theological arguments, but it is difficult to disagree or argue with a changed life!

The Apostle Paul had perhaps the greatest theological mind and grasp of truth that any believer has ever had. Twice in the book of Acts we see him sharing his personal testimony of how he came to faith in Christ. Your testimony is also a powerful tool that the Holy Spirit can use to draw others to Christ. Use the outline below (taken from chapter 8 of *Share Jesus Like It Matters*) to script your testimony. You need to be able to share your testimony in 4 minutes or less. You want to keep it short enough for your audience of one to remain engaged.

### **Tell Others What Life Was Like before You Met Jesus.**

Describe how you felt before knowing Jesus as Savior and Lord. Tell of your sense of purposelessness; guilt and shame caused by sin; or confusion about the meaning of life. Tell them how you struggled with sin prior to knowing Jesus in salvation. Even a child can give a testimony and tell about how the Lord caused him to feel sorry for his sins against God.

But remember, you do *not* need to share details about your former sins. Your aim is to give glory to God, not the devil. Instead, when talking about your former sins, speak in general terms. Say something like: "Before I met Jesus, I was involved in things that were wrong. If my parents had known what I was doing it would've broken their hearts." Keep it general. Don't exalt sin or the devil; exalt Jesus!

**Tell Others How You Came to Sense Your Need for Salvation.** Talk about how you moved from merely recognizing you were a sinner to the fact that you yearned for Jesus to save you. If someone shared Jesus with you to bring that about that desire, describe how it happened. If you came under conviction by reading the Bible or a Gospel tract, tell them exactly how it happened. Tell them, “I began to sense my need for salvation because....”

**Tell Others How You Were Converted to Christ.** Briefly describe how you were saved. Who shared Jesus with you? How did they lead you to faith in Him? What was it like when you **repented** of your sin, **believed** in Jesus, and called on His name, **receiving** Him as your Savior and Lord?

**Tell Others What Your Life Is Like Now That You Are Saved.** Contrast what your life was like before you met Jesus and what it is like now that He has become your Savior. Say something like, “Before I met Jesus, I worried about almost everything. But now I enjoy peace that can only come from Him.”

Knowing how to effectively share your testimony is one of the greatest steps you will take in learning how to lead others to faith in Christ.